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## House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ADERHOLT).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
November 7, 2005.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ROBERT B. ADERHOLT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) for 5 minutes.

### FEDERAL SPENDING AND THE DEFICIT

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as we all know this week, the House will consider very important legislation to reduce Federal spending, root out waste and fraud in government programs, and make a large dent in our Federal deficit. Along with cutting taxes and supporting job creation, making government more responsive is a critical part of our Republican agenda to keep our economy growing.

Mr. Speaker, the numbers are in. Our agenda is working for the American

people. Despite the destruction caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the economy grew at a 3.8 percent GDP level last quarter. Now, that is ahead of the second quarter and certainly ahead of projections that we had in the wake of those hurricanes. Over the past 12 months, nearly 2 million new jobs have been created.

Because of tax cuts and a strong economy, Federal revenue increased by almost 15 percent last year, and the deficit fell by nearly \$96 billion. Mr. Speaker, this happened not by raising taxes, but by cutting them and empowering America's entrepreneurs. In the face of such remarkable progress, we are not about to let up. We are moving forward with reforms that will save more than \$50 billion over the next 5 years. This will help us reduce the deficit even further and support rebuilding along the gulf coast.

I commend the hard work done by all the committees who found significant savings in mandatory programs without altering benefits to those who are truly in need. While I am hoping for bipartisan support of this legislation, I fear that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will stand in the way of restraint and reform. After all, my Democratic friends voted against our responsible budget. During the appropriations process, Mr. Speaker, they offered amendments that would have increased Federal spending by \$61 billion.

While they measure compassion through spending, we demand results through reform. Mr. Speaker, mandatory spending needs to be reformed. Each year, the government funds critical programs at increasingly higher levels. But we have seen that automatic spending breeds unaccountable spending.

Consider Medicaid. As medicine has made rapid advances over the past two decades, Medicaid has not been updated. The program costs more, delivers less, and, as we all know, is beset

with abuse. In 2002, the Department of Health and Human Services found that Medicaid was paying pharmacies \$1.5 billion more than the cost of those drugs they were dispensing. In one case, Medicaid paid over \$5,000 for a prescription that cost a pharmacy just \$88.

Our reforms will save billions by giving States more flexibility, eliminating fraud and ensuring the system only serves the needy. It is also important to note that Medicaid will continue to grow in the years ahead. Right now, it grows at a rate of 7.3 percent. Under our plan, it will grow at 7 percent.

We are also zeroing in on other programs, Mr. Speaker, that can benefit from reforms. The food stamp program nearly doubled to \$35 billion over the past 5 years. While funding will continue to grow, we are targeting savings of less than one-half of 1 percent. We will do this in part by extending the eligibility waiting period for noncitizens from 5 to 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, public benefits should not be a magnet for immigration. Over the past 5 years, Federal spending for child support administrative costs has increased by 29 percent while caseloads have declined by 8 percent. The Ways and Means Committee saves over \$3 billion by splitting administrative costs 50/50 with the States, the same match that they use for other entitlement programs.

Mr. Speaker, our savings proposals are common sense and responsible, and they represent a very good and important start. In the months ahead, we will continue to work for ways to cut the deficit, eliminate waste and reduce discretionary spending. Because as Republicans, we are committed to growing our economy, not Federal spending.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to what I know will be a lively debate on this issue as we bring our package for reform forward, and it will, I believe, when we implement this, help us in our

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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